

Abstract 661**TITLE:** AIDS Prevention to a Hip-Hop Generation**AUTHORS:** Torman Jahi, Olga Chwascinska, John Chaich, AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland.**ISSUE:** Trends in HIV infection rates show that youth and racial minority groups are highly affected populations. Whereas many existing HIV prevention efforts use scientific or fear-based strategies, racial minority youth acquire many cultural values and information from hip-hop and rap music, television, music videos, and popular film. Thus, HIV educators can use the sources of high-risk population's entertainment for HIV prevention.**SETTING:** The proposed presenters, from a variety of cultures and identities, have developed and implemented population specific prevention programs which drawn from diverse experiences. They share a focus on youth, ages 13-25 who are in school and out of school, with many of racial, gender, class, and sexual identities. The program include one-time and multi-session interventions to individuals and groups.**PROJECT:** Addressing the discrepancy between urban youth culture and traditional HIV prevention Jahi, Chwascinska, and Chaich have created interventions that use the language and cultural norms of the target audiences. Jahi utilizes hip-hop, music videos and popular films as sources of information about safer-sex and sexual decision-making, and sources of metaphors about the biology of HIV/AIDS transmission. He applies this approach for one time and six sessions/interventions, as well as with an ongoing African-American youth peer-educator group. Chwascinska works with youth to create 'zines, self-published HIV prevention mini-magazines, written for and by youth and distributes them during street outreach. Chaich has written, directed and produced young adult AIDS theatre, as well as an AIDS and youth culture mini-magazine. All three of these educators' use of a client-centered approach allows the target populations to make decisions so that they may effectively reach their peers.**RESULTS:** By addressing target populations in their language and integrating prevention messages into the populations cultural imagery and music, the educators engage target populations in conversations about HIV/AIDS, sexual practices, drug use, and other concerns related to health risk and safety. Audiences identify with the content, and are responsive. The client-centered approach, which asks the target populations to make decisions about how messages should be crafted, presented and disseminated, empowers them to "own" the message. Subsequently, they are more likely to promote it in their social circles. By linking everyday images with HIV prevention message, they also develop an associative link between their popular culture and health promotion.**LESSONS LEARNED:** The first lesson is the effectiveness of combining creativity with the target population's culture. To attaining this effectiveness the educators considered organizational needs and barriers to successful interventions. They developed the necessary tools to begin such programs, ensure their popularity, and find and secure necessary funding. Currently, they are developing and testing various evaluation methods to track the effectiveness of these interventions.**PRESENTER CONTACT INFORMATION****Name:** Olga Chwascinska c/o AIDS Task force of Greater Cleveland**Address:** 2728 Euclid Ave., Suite 400
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